

NOTES

Human Interest Story is an off-the-wall, romantic comedy and should be performed by a male and female and may be entered in either Duo Interpretation or Duet Acting; however, this one-act play could also be used as a Humorous Interpretation and be performed by either a male or female. This play contains several shifts in both locations and in the characters being portrayed; therefore, it is important to make the physical transitions between the scenes and the portrayal of the multiple characters crystal clear with clever choreography. While it is imperative that the portrayal of Brian Shipwood and Meredith Steeple maintain a high-level of professionalism and likeability, it will be the performers' choice as to just how over-the-top Cliff Thorne and Natasha Snarvey are to be portrayed. This is a show-stopper for two talented, comedic performers, who have a knack for presenting a farcical, romantic comedy!

Characters:

Brian Shipwood, an on-air news anchor for Channel 7 News

Meredith Steeple, an on-air news anchor for Channel 7 News

Cliff Thorne, a sleazy host for the tabloid news program, *Burn*

Natasha Snarvey, a sleazy host for the tabloid news program, *Burn*

Scene One: Channel 7 News Room

Brian Shipwood and Meredith Steeple are anchoring the news report.

Brian: Tonight on Channel 7 News at 10: A powerful local business closes its doors for good. What this means for consumers shopping for produce.

Meredith: Also, record heat in the area causes a serious rise in mosquito activity. We'll give you tips about how to keep those pesky insects away with unconventional remedies.

Brian: Plus, don't miss some funny videos of bears in garages.

Meredith: They're pretty funny.

Brian: They really are. You won't believe what these bears are doing...in garages.

Meredith: I didn't believe it.

Brian: Neither did I. (*Awkward pause*) I'm Brian Shipwood.

Meredith: And I'm Meredith Steeple. Thanks for joining us tonight. We'll be right back. (*Meredith and Brian smile at each other. It is clear they are off the air.*)

Brian: What are you doing?

Meredith: What do you mean what am I doing? That was just banter.

Brian: That wasn't banter. That was flirting.

Meredith: It was not.

Brian: Meredith, are you kidding me? You might as well just unbutton my shirt right here.

Meredith: Do you think anyone noticed?

Brian: Of course not, we only have a viewer-ship of 500,000 people.

Meredith: Don't start with me.

Brian: I will start with you—(*Freezes, takes a glass of water from one of the stagehands, and puts on a fake smile*) Thank you so much, Gina.

Meredith: Thaaaanks, Gina.

Brian: (*Drops the smile, addressing Meredith again*) I will start with you. (*Covers the microphone on his lapel*) Because I care about you.

Meredith: (*Covering her microphone*) I care about you, too.

Brian: Let's just keep the banter professional. Okay?

Meredith: Professional banter. Got it.

Brian: I got us a vintage Merlot for tonight. It's a '76.

Meredith: Oooh, you know I love that year.

Brian: I know you do.

Meredith: You're cute.

Brian: No, you're cute. (*Suddenly, Brian and Meredith both snap back to professional mode and stare straight into the camera.*)

Brian: Welcome back to Channel 7 News at 10. We've got some great stories for you tonight, don't we, Meredith?

Meredith: We sure do, Brian. But first, let's go to Ricky Truelove with the weather. What's the weekend looking like, Ricky?

The camera cuts to the weatherman, and we see Brian and Meredith give a big sigh of relief.

Scene Two: Brian Shipwood's home.

Brian is lighting candles and putting on romantic music. There is a knock at the door. Brian answers it, and he and Meredith exchange professional greetings; however, as soon as the door is closed, they kiss each other passionately.

Brian: I've missed you so much.

Meredith: We just saw each other half an hour ago.

Brian: But that was at work. We might as well be strangers there.

Meredith: I know what you mean.

Brian: (*Looking out his window blinds*) Did anyone follow you?

Meredith: I don't think so.

Brian: Can you imagine what people would say if they found out that

Channel 7's two top anchors were in love?

Meredith: People would lose their minds.

Brian: It would be the top story.

Meredith: We'd lose our credibility.

Brian: (*Laughing at the possibility*) They'd move us to cooking segments.

Meredith: Shut your mouth. They wouldn't.

Brian: (*Smiling*) You *know* they would.

Meredith: I know. They might as well just abandon us in the desert! We can't let that happen!

Brian: (*Pouring her some wine*) Would you like some wine?

Meredith: Thanks.

Meredith: Do you think the crew is suspicious?

Brian: Not a chance. The stage crews are too focused on their microphones and their lights to even look at us for a second. I talked to that girl who does the prompter, Tina, Tiffany...

Meredith: Sheryl?

Brian: Right, Sheryl. Who was I thinking of?

Meredith: No idea.

Brian: Whatever. I was talking to Sheryl the other day, asking "Hey, how are you? How are things?" And she seemed amazed that I was actually talking without reading her prompter.

Meredith: They're such sweet, little, weird people.

Brian: Aren't they? Needless to say, I think we're fine.

Meredith: I can't believe we've kept our secret this long.

Brian: I know. It's been the craziest and most passionate three weeks of my life. (*Beat*) Meredith, can I ask you something?

Meredith: Shoot.

Brian: When did you first know you were in love with me?

Meredith: Oh, that's easy. It was months ago. You were doing that story about Greek yogurt...

Brian: Ah yes, some of my finest work.

Meredith: Your diction was perfect, your empathy was perfect, and your hair was perfect. I thought to myself, "Now *this...* is a man." And I was so caught up in your story and your eyes that I almost missed my cue for the next story.

Brian: Cupids' arrows obviously made a synchronized hit.

Meredith: Why do you say that?

Brian: Because that's the same moment I realized how amazing you were.

Meredith: Really?

Brian: I had just finished the Greek yogurt piece, and I looked over at you. Your eyes caught mine, and it felt like the world stopped.

Meredith: It did. It did stop.

Brian: People must have thought their cable was screwing up, because we were just frozen like statues.